

VZCZCXRO9810  
OO RUEHLH RUEHPW  
DE RUEHIL #0552/01 0741318  
ZNY CCCCC ZZB  
O 151318Z MAR 09  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1879  
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 9999  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 9887  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 4617  
RUEHPK/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 1273  
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 6936  
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 5863  
RHMISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ISLAMABAD 000552

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/04/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTEF](#) [PGOV](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: WHAT'S NEXT?

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson, for reasons 1.4 (b)(d)

11. (C) Summary. Absent a terrorist attack or what we believe is unlikely Army intervention, the lawyers' "long march" will end with both sides cl

12. (C) Absent a terrorist attack or what we believe is unlikely Army intervention, the lawyers' "long march" will end with both sides cl Sharifs' Eligibility

13. (C) Zardari has agreed to seek a review of the Supreme Court's decision to disqualify Nawaz and Shahbaz Sharif from public office. The

14. (C) The Court could again rule that both Sharifs are ineligible, could clear them both for public office, or could issue a split judgment. There have been several suggestions on how to address Nawaz's predicament. He could appeal his original conviction, executed under the Musha

15. (C) Zardari and many Pakistan People's Party (PPP) members claim they were surprised the Court ruled against Shahbaz, indicating this was Governor's Rule

16. (C) There are several opinions on the subject, but post's legal sources (and President Zardari's spokesman) confirm that simply filing a request for Supreme Court review will return a case to the status quo, pending a new court decision. Thus, filing

ISLAMABAD 00000552 002 OF 003

temporarily restore Shahbaz as Chief Minister of Punjab and end governor's rule.

17. (C) However, in the wake of governor's rule, it is unclear if the PPP-Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) coalition in the Punjab can For its part, the PML leadership distrusts both Zardari and Nawaz but has made more offers to join PPP than PML-N. PML's suggestion of a th Judiciary Issue

18. (C) During the February 2008 election campaign, Nawaz made common cause with the populist lawyers' movement seeking to restore the jud

19. (C) Particularly after being reinstated, Chaudhry became increasingly active on the bench, inserting the Court into issues ranging from The public perception (which continues to be fed by Zardari) is that Chaudhry was removed because the U.S. did not want "disappeared" terrorists released by the Court. This is completely untrue but h

10. (C) Before this latest controversy, the lawyers' movement was fizzling badly as a public facing 30% food and fuel inflation had more i

11. (C) Zardari has told us repeatedly that he will not/not restore Chaudhry as Chief Justice. Although Nawaz publicly has said Chaudhry Winners and Losers

12. (C) From political commentators to Army leaders and the man on the street, the overwhelming view is that Zardari seriously overreached

ISLAMABAD 00000552 003 OF 003

The decision has expanded rifts within the PPP and between Zardari and his coalition partners. It reinforced Zardari's already dubious rep

13. (C) After Zardari left him no other option, Nawaz had little to lose from moving forward to join the lawyers' march. Even a weak tr

14. (C) The big winner is Prime Minister Gilani, who has adroitly positioned himself (as both a PPP stalwart and friend to PML-N and PMI

PATTERSON